

affected owing to suspension of flights to Kuwait and some other destinations for a shorter period and increased in operational costs on account of fuel and insurance rates.

(b) Air India had operated charter flights for Gulf evacuation and had raised a bill for Rs. 180 crores.

(c) Air India has met the impact of Gulf war through improvement in the yield and tight control over expenses and recorded a net profit of Rs. 81.23 crores in the year 1990-91.

[Translation]

Production of Iodised Salt

4124. SHRI SIMON MARAND: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether most of the areas in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are affected by goitre because of the use of the uniodised salt;

(b) if so, the present output and demand of iodised salt in the country;

(c) the names of the units which supply iodised salt to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh;

(d) whether the Government have given approval to some industries for the production of iodised salt in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the measures taken to ascertain the supply of iodised salt to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D.K. THARADEVI SIDDHARTHA): (a) Yes, Sir. As per survey conducted by Central Goitre Survey Team most of the areas in Bihar & Uttar Pradesh

are affected by Goitre. In order to control the problems of goitre both the States of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh have banned the sale of salt other than iodised salt for edible purposes, in their respective states.

(b) The current annual demand of iodised salt in areas where sale of non-iodised salt for edible purposes has been banned, is estimated as 25.27 lakhs M.T. As against this actual production of iodised salt during the year 1990-91 was 25.06 lakh M.T.

(c) Iodised salt is being supplied to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh from Rajasthan, Jam Nagar, Madras, Kharaghoda zones through Salt Commissioner, Government of India, Jaipur.

(d) and (e). Information is being collected from the concerned authorities.

[English]

Activities of Mafia Gangs in Trains

4125. SHRI SOMJIBHAI DAMOR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether gangs are operating as hawkers in the mail/express trains between Guwahati and New Jalpaiguri in connivance with railway officials;

(b) whether there are incidence of inconveniences to the passengers in the reserved compartments thereby;

(c) whether there are complaints from the passengers in this regard; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to curb these unauthorised activities in trains and action proposed to be taken against the officials found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE

MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MAL-LIKARJUN): (a) to (c). No, Sir. However, some unauthorised hawkers travelling in trains have been detected.

(d) Surprise checks are conducted from time to time jointly by Commercial and Railway Protection Force/Govt. Railway Police personnel to apprehend unauthorised hawkers/vendors travelling in trains. The persons so apprehended are dealt with in accordance with law.

Quality Education to Economically Backward Students

4126. SHRI HARISH NARAYAN PRABHU ZANTYE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to provide quality education to the economically backward students to improve their lots; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) and (b). The National Policy on Education, 1986 (NPE) envisages a national system of education, whereby upto a given level all students irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex would have access to education of a comparable quality. Following NPE, the Government launched a number of schemes like the Operation Blackboard, restructuring and reorganisation of teacher education, programme for improving science education, computer literacy in schools, and educational technology.

As envisaged by NPE, Navodaya Vidyalayas are being set up to provide quality education to children with special

talent or aptitude, largely from a rural background.

AIDS Menace in Bombay

4127. SHRIMATI BASAVA RAJESWARI:

SHRI R. SURENDER REDDY:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "AIDS may strike Bombay in three years" appearing in the 'Indian Express' dated September 23, 1991; and

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D.K. THARADEVI SIDDHARTHA): (a) The Government has seen the news item.

(b) According to the latest report received from Maharashtra Government, out of a total no. of 1,06,910 persons screened upto 1,11,91, 3232 have been tested for HIV sero-positive. The total no. of AIDS cases reported from Maharashtra as 53. Out of the 1,06,910 samples tested, 44,744 samples belonged to be hetero-sexual promiscuous persons. In this group, 1341 samples were found to be sero-positive and this constituted nearly 5% of the samples screened of the group.

As preventive measures against AIDS, the Govt. have established:-

- (i) Surveillance centres for screening blood of high risk groups.